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Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Human rights questions: implementation of human rights instruments; human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms; comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Letter dated 3 December 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement released on 30 November 2001 by the Spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Japan's unprecedented suppression of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 117 and 119 (a), (b), (d) and (e).

(*Signed*) **Kim** Chang Guk
Ambassador
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Annex to the letter dated 3 December 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Japan's unprecedented suppression of Chongryon

Pyongyang, November 30, 2001

The Japanese authorities ransacked the central and local headquarters of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon) on 29 November 2001 with the mobilization of hundreds of policemen, an act of repression unprecedented in history.

As is already known, the Japanese authorities kicked up an unprecedented racket in their search for credit associations of the Korean bank, a financial body of Korean traders and industrialists in Japan, under the pretext of the offence of "evasion of inspection".

This time they ransacked even the Chongryon central headquarters, groundlessly linking its central standing committee with the issue related to the business activities of the Korean bank. This goes to prove that such search was an intentional political plot to attack Chongryon itself.

As far as the issue of the Korean bank is concerned, the matter is related to the overall state of depression of the Japanese economy, not to any illegal transactions or "evasion of inspection". A large number of businesses of Japan and the South Korean residents association in Japan are now undergoing a financial crisis.

Chongryon repeatedly clarified to the Japanese Government that there has been nothing in violation of the Japanese laws in its transactions with credit associations of the Korean bank and all its activities have been legitimate ones in line with them.

This notwithstanding, the Japanese reactionaries seriously overstated only the issue of the Korean bank in particular, and forcibly searched even the central headquarters of Chongryon, a dignified overseas citizens organization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), deliberately pulling it apart without any legal ground.

This is a high-handed criminal act and a despicable political crackdown upon Chongryon and compatriots in Japan and, furthermore, a flagrant infringement upon the sovereignty of the DPRK.

Japan, which has failed to settle its past of great crimes, has doubled its crimes by recklessly provoking and suppressing Chongryon, an organization advocating the rights and interests of Korean compatriots in Japan who are the very victims of forced drafting by Japan.

It is universally known that the Japanese authorities have applied the "law on the prevention of subversive activities" to Chongryon and escalated the suppression of it under various pretexts whenever the situation in the surrounding areas became tense.

However, we cannot but follow this incident with particular vigilance as this was the first undisguised political suppression of Chongryon since its formation and this took place at a time when Japan is putting its wild design for overseas expansion into practice really in earnest, taking advantage of the war against terrorism.

Any suppression of Chongryon whatsoever constitutes an infringement upon the dignity and sovereignty of the DPRK.

We will never tolerate such a tyrannical act, which seriously mocks and antagonizes the DPRK and aggravates the regional situation, nor will we remain a passive onlooker in the face of the escalating acts carried out against the DPRK.

The Japanese authorities should stop at once the fascist suppression of Chongryon, apologize for this and unconditionally and immediately release the people who have been arrested unreasonably.

If they persist in their hostile acts despite our repeated warnings, they will have to bear full responsibility for all the ensuing consequences.